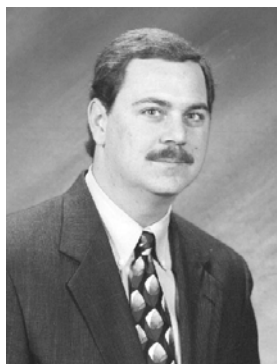
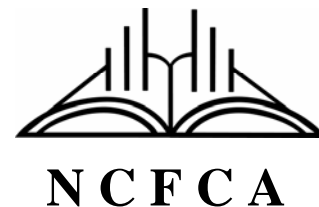


National Christian Forensics & Communications Association
President's Letter ♦ January 2006



Dear NCFCA Affiliate Families,

Proverbs 11:14 states, “Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.” This proverb is applicable to many areas of life, especially those pertaining to decision making. It instructs each of us to seek a multitude of counselors when making decisions. So how does this apply to speech and debate? We might also ask, “What would a competitive forensics tournament look like without judges?” This rhetorical question is difficult to answer, since competitive speech and debate events require judges to test a student’s communication skills. And it is not just one judge, or critic, or counselor, if you will, which is best suited to this task. Taking our example from Proverbs 11:14, a multitude of counselors can provide the best feedback for speech and debate competitions. With this encouragement in mind, let’s take a peek at the NCFCA Judge Philosophy which was recently released to the NCFCA website.

The NCFCA Judge Philosophy provides an explanation for the different types of judges recruited to judge NCFCA tournaments. The diverse NCFCA judging pool includes experienced judges (both those with NCFCA experience and those from other leagues), lay judges, affiliated judges (parents and coaches), community judges, and judges with worldviews which are both similar to and different from those of NCFCA competitors. Simply put, the Judge Philosophy encourages the recruitment of a mix of these different judge types at each tournament. A mix of judge types works well to develop competent Christian communicators who are prepared to reach a broad range of audience members.

The Judge Philosophy document contains three parts; an Executive Summary outlining key issues, a Judge Matrix visually presenting different judge types, and a lengthy discussion covering background information and the benefits of the different judge types within NCFCA tournaments. Any individual involved in an NCFCA leadership position (Regional Coordinators, State Representatives, Tournament Directors, Club Leaders, Judge Recruitment Coordinators, etc.) is strongly encouraged to read at least the Executive Summary and the Judge Matrix. Reading the entire document will enable NCFCA leaders to help promote a balanced judge recruitment within the league.

The Judge Philosophy has been two years in the making, and has undergone many drafts and re-drafts to get to its current state. Many thanks go to Christy Shipe and the other members of the Debate Committee who have worked diligently through many hurdles to prepare this document.

We’ll have more league news and information next month.

Grace & Peace,

